



**The Impact of State Budget Cuts
to the IL Department of Human Services,
Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse
on The Women's Treatment Center**

9/8/11

For the past 20 years The Women's Treatment Center has partnered with the State of Illinois to help its most vulnerable citizens – women and women with children – access comprehensive, high-quality substance abuse treatment designed specifically for them.

Now the state faces difficult economic times. The Women's Treatment Center understands the need for belt-tightening. But current funding cuts to the DHS-DASA budget of 21.9% translate into a loss of approximately one million dollars to The Women's Treatment Center.

This is poor planning for the future: The Governor's budget completely ignores the devastating domino effect such a cut will have on the vital human services provided by Illinois' non-profit organizations.

TWTC provides not only substance abuse treatment to women, but also mental health services, medical care, parenting classes, and case management. We provide child development services, mental health services, and medical care for their young children as well. While general revenue dollars from the state fund core services at TWTC, the needs of the women and children we serve are far greater than that funding covers. So we have carefully and skillfully leveraged those dollars by securing private foundation and federal grants to expand

capacity and enhance services, both for women who have no income, no insurance (including Medicaid) and no other resources, and for their children.

The current budget cut of approximately one million dollars will force The Women's Treatment Center to dramatically reduce services to the most vulnerable women and children. At a minimum, 208 women who need substance abuse treatment in our residential treatment programs will be turned away. This is impacting not just the women but their families as well.

Added to this loss of services is the loss of jobs for program staff and support staff, which puts additional tax-paying families at risk and in need of state services.

Illinois must stop balancing the budget on the backs of the people who have no where else to turn. The Women's Treatment Center is part of Illinois' vital safety net for our most vulnerable families. In the face of state funding cuts over the past three years we have significantly constricted our budget while leveraging additional funding in an effort to continue to best serve those in need. This continued erosion of funding will push TWTC closer to the brink of closing.

It is unconscionable for the state legislature and Governor to continue to unravel Illinois' safety net and to act as if the consequences are somehow manageable. Cutting vital substance abuse treatment dollars will only mean a far greater demand on the state's criminal justice, public health and child welfare services – services that are far more expensive in the short- as well as long-run. These cuts will have a negative generational impact on our communities that Illinois can ill afford if it truly seeks to be competitive going forward.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jewell Oates". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left.

Jewell Oates, Ph.D.
Executive Director